

# Fatality Narrative

## Diesel Mechanic Killed After his Truck Left a Gravel Road\*

**Industry:** Highway and street construction

**Occupation:** Diesel mechanic

**Task:** Driving service truck

**Type of Incident:** Motor vehicle overturn

**Release Date:** March 19, 2003

**Case No.:** 02WA039

**SHARP Report No.:** 71-8-2003

On July 21, 2002, a construction machinery maintenance mechanic employed by a highway and street construction company was driving a service vehicle on a gravel pit access road when the vehicle left the road and rolled over. The 46-year-old driver was not wearing a seatbelt and was ejected or jumped from the vehicle. He died at the scene. The incident occurred at about 1 p.m. The employer was building a road in a rural area. The gravel pit from which the deceased was exiting when the incident occurred was used by the employer as a construction staging area and for storage of construction machinery and vehicles. The brakes on the truck were not adequately maintained.

### Requirements/Recommendations

(! Indicates items required by law)

- ! Ensure that all motor vehicle systems are properly maintained.
- ! Make a pre-trip safety inspection of motor vehicles.
- ! Always wear a seat belt. Establish a written policy to ensure compliance.
- Institute a formal hazard reporting system and train employees on the system.
- Develop a preventative maintenance program and train employees on the program.
- Do not alter existing vehicle systems without first contacting the manufacturer.
- Employers should establish company vehicle driving guidelines and expectations for all employees who drive vehicles as part of their job function.

**State Wide Statistics:** This was the 45<sup>th</sup> work-related fatality in Washington State during the year 2002 and was the 23<sup>rd</sup> motor vehicle fatality of the year.

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*This bulletin was developed at the Washington State Department of Labor and Industries to alert employers and employees in a timely manner of a tragic loss of life of a worker in Washington State. We encourage you to consider the above information as you make safety decisions for or recommendations to your company or constituency. The information in this notice is based on preliminary data ONLY and does not represent final determinations regarding the nature of the incident or conclusions regarding the cause of the fatality.*

Developed by the Washington State Fatality Assessment and Control Evaluation (FACE) and Washington Industrial Safety and Health Act (WISHA) Programs at the WA State Dept. of Labor & Industries. For more information, contact the Safety and Health Assessment and Research for Prevention (SHARP) Program, 1-888-667-4277, <http://www.lni.wa.gov/sharp/face>.